tion technology in the leather industry, the Government has permitted import of machinery and chemicals in the leather and leather product sector with concessional rates of duty.

Besides, the Government with UNDP assistance has drawn up an integrated National Leather Development Programme to enable the leather industry in the country to face the challenges in the national and international markets. There are different components of the National Leather Development Programme such as human resources development, design and product development, development of supporting industries, effluent treatment and control and strengthening export capability.

A number of programmes with the assistance of various international agencies have also been undertaken to improve the production technology and marketing etc. in the leather sector. The Government has also permitted duty free import of raw hides and skins, chrome tanned leather, crust leather, finished leather, to augment availability of leather.

In order to ensure quality of Indian leather and leather goods, the Burea of Indian Standards is coordinating the activities of the ISO TC-120 Leather EN Standards EEC regulation/harmonisation of Indian standards of footwear and other leather items with ISO standards.

(c) to (e) While some seizures of leather hides & skins have been made by our agencies at our borders, there are no official reports of large-scale smuggling of leather hides & skins across neighbouring countries. However, with a view to check smuggling on these borders, our agencies have strengthened the vigilance and intelligence set up on our borders.

Exclusive Bank to met the Requirements of EOUs/EPZs.

2660. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to set up an exclusive bank to meet the fund requirements of EOUs/EPZs since the EOUs/EPZs are finding it extremely difficult to obtain funds through normal banking channels;

(b) if so, the details of proposals received by Government in this regard;

(c) the actual status of these proposals and final decision, if any, taken in the matter; and

(d) the details of other measures recently taken/proposed for the success of EOUs/EPZs?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (c) There is no proposal to set up an exclusive Bank to meet the fund requirements of EOU/EPZ units.

(d) Some measures recently taken to improve the competitiveness of EOU/EPZ units include the facility to convert export earnings at market rate of exchange, and simplification of Export—Import Policy and Procedures.

Anti-Dumping Duty

2661. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to levy anti-dumping duty on several items; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and the names of the items likely to be effected?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) and (b) The Indian Customs, Tariff Act, 1975 empowers the Government to impose anti-dumping duties in those cases in

which dumped imports are found to be causing material injury to the domestic industry.

While anti-dumping investigations on imports of PVC resin, Styrene Butadiene rubber and Bisphenol-A have been initiated at the request of the Indian industry no final decision has been taken in this regard.

Export of Agricultural Products

2662. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of decline in the exports of agricultural products during the current year as compared to the exports during the corresponding period in 1991;

(b) what is the decline in the committed exports of agricultural products to U.S.S.R. after its disintegration;

(c) what is the overall decline in foreign exchange earnings as a result of decline in the exports of agricultural products;

(d) what are the major reasons for the decline of agricultural products in the internationl markets; and

(e) what is the strategy, if any, formulated by Government to step up exports of agricultural products during 1993?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (d) The exports of agricultural products during April-October 1992 are estimated to be Rs. 2743 crores as against Rs. 2322 crores during the corresponding period of the previous year. This reflects an increase of 18%. Exports from this sector to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) during April-August this year are down to Rs. 89 crores as against Rs. 151 crores during the corresponding period of the previous year.

(e) The main elements of the strategy to step up exports of agricultural products are:—

(1) Increase in production and productivity of important items such as fresh fruits and vegetables;

(2) Improved price competitiveness;

(3) Aggressive marketing in the potential countries through participation in exhibitions, holding of Buyer-Seller Meets and interaction with importers;

(4) Value addition;

(5) Quality assurance programmes.

Exploring New Market for F.C.V. Tombacco

2663. DR YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken by Government to explore new export market for F.C.V. Tobacco;

(b) whether it is a fact that the per unit value realisation for our tobacco is much less, as compared to other countries;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps have been taken to redress the same?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Steps taken to explore new markets for F.C.V. Tobacco include:

—Sending trade delegations to identified new markets of FCV tobacco.

—Participation in International Exhibitions.

—Aggressive publicity in overseas markets.

—Pursuing with Governments through Joint Committee meetings etc. to import Indian tobacco.

—Inviting delegations from tobacco